



# HSLDA ONLINE ACADEMY

## English 3: American Literature & Writing

### Tentative 2019–20 Booklist

Title	Edition	Author/Editor	ISBN	Available on the Academy's Bookstore?
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	See note on p. 2	Twain, Mark	9780143107323	Yes – find it here.
American Literature Anthology	2017	McGraw Hill Education		Yes – find it here.
Billy Budd, Sailor		Focus on the Family Radio Theater		Yes – find it here.
Essential American Documents & Speeches: Vol. I	2013	Prestwick House Publishing	978-1-62019-132-3	**Purchase this version from Prestwick House
Fahrenheit 451	*	Bradbury, Ray	9781451673319	Yes – find it here.
Gilead	*	Robinson, Marilynne	9780312424404	Yes – find it here.
Great American Poems	2008	Prestwick House Publishing	978-1-60389-071-7	No
The Great Gatsby	*	Fitzgerald, F. Scott	9780743273565	Yes – find it here.
The Scarlet Letter	2005	Hawthorne, Nathaniel	9781853260292	Yes – find it here.

Twelve Angry Men	1997	Rose, Reginald	978-0-87129-327-5	Purchase <a href="#">this version</a> from Prestwick House
Up From Slavery	2010	Washington, Booker T.	9780451531476	<a href="#">Yes – find it here.</a>

**Please note:**

1. **\*\*** If you purchase this book from a vendor other than Prestwick House, please pay close attention to the title of the book when buying, as this ISBN has been linked to other, incorrect, titles.
2. Books marked with \* do not have required editions. Page numbers will differ between publishers.
3. Books and materials requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the instructors.
4. The **American Literature Anthology** is a custom resource created specifically for the Academy’s English 3 course. It can be ordered through the Academy’s online bookstore.
5. Essential American Documents & Speeches: Vol I is only available directly from Prestwick House Publishing, and can be purchased [here](#).
6. Book synopses and potential disclaimers can be found on the following pages of this PDF.

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If you would like more information about English 3, please contact us at **540-338-8290** (*Monday–Friday; 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. EST*), or send an email to [academy@hsllda.org](mailto:academy@hsllda.org).

## *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

**Synopsis:** Twain is easily one of the most memorable American authors, and this novel it is considered one of the top ten American novels ever written. This text focuses on a young orphan named Huck Finn and his journey across Mississippi in search of freedom from his abusive father. Along the way, he comes across Jim, an escaped slave who is also on the run towards freedom. The story recounts how this unlikely pair becomes friends no matter how difficult their adventure is. Twain captures the harsh realities of American themes that existed both before and after the Civil War, yet shares how one boy could make such a positive difference in the life of a runaway slave.

**Reasons for teaching:** We recognize that this text is controversial, but it readily captures the complexities of racism both before and after the Civil War. It is sadly an accurate display of American history; however, it is also a positive representation of how racism was not accepted by everyone and how some Americans were quick to help and fight for what was right. Through the use of Scripture and a variety of expository texts, students will evaluate this novel against American history and determine whether characters in *Huck Finn* responded biblically or not. Content discussions will look at prejudices and racism, intellectual and moral education, the hypocrisy of

“civilized” society, and the value of human life on the sole basis that God created every individual and He revels in our differences. Concepts reviewed and evaluated through this text include: satire, narrator, setting, symbolism, theme, rhetorical devices, diction, and tone.

**Disclaimer:** This text uses period language that captures the realities of American history. Most notably, it uses a pejorative term when referring to Jim, an African American. Momentary drunkenness, thievery, violence, and trickery show up throughout the text.

Parents who are concerned about the use of racially derogatory language in the novel are free to consider using the [NewSouth Edition](#).

## *American Literature Anthology from McGraw Hill*

**Synopsis:** This is a 250-page collection of Academy-selected American short stories, poems, and non-fiction text, compiled in one easy reader for students. All selections were made with discretion. These short texts represent writing from Colonial America to the very end of the 20th century. This text is made available only through the Academy. A few titles include “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” “Rip Van Winkle,” “The Story of an Hour,” “To Build a Fire,” “The Lottery,” and “Letter from Birmingham Jail.”

## *Essential Documents & Speeches: Volume 1*

**Synopsis:** This short anthology includes some of the most significant speeches and documents relevant to American history. It offers great diversity in rhetoric, depth, subject, and impact. Specific authors that will be studied include George Washington, Sojourner Truth, Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan.

**Reasons for teaching:** Our course will analyze how history impacted each author’s perspective and, therefore, his or her writing. Through these documents, students will learn about major cross-points in American history and how such moments influenced America’s political character, individuals’ beliefs and views, and essentially, the written word. Students will analyze the rhetoric, examine reasoning, and determine purpose, meaning, and effect for each document studied.

## *Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury*

**Synopsis:** This science fiction novel is categorized as a dystopian tale, set in a futuristic world where books are forbidden by law. Ray Bradbury explores how censorship thrives in darkness, showing that, when there is no light, people lose ability to create, explore, analyze, and question. The protagonist of the text, with the help of newfound friends, realizes how ideas are absolutely necessary for a free society.

**Reasons for teaching:** This text was written as a warning to what could happen if we become too obsessed by frantic consumption and shallow entertainment. Content discussions will look at some of the similarities between Bradbury’s 1953 warnings and our 21st century American society. We will also debate the ideas of censorship and banned books. Concepts reviewed and evaluated through this text include dystopian and science fiction elements, literary devices, point-of-view, and theme.

**Disclaimer:** As with any dystopian style of text, there are science-fictional elements dealing with darker themes such as oppression, violence, and death. This text includes violent “technology” and a scene where a woman attempts to overdose on prescription pills.

## *Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson

**Synopsis:** This 21st century novel is uniquely written in the form of a letter from an aging father to his young son. The father reflects back on stories and recollections and gives reasoning for why three generations of his family have all served as pastors of the Congregationalist church in Gilead. Through the course of this letter, readers are transported back in history to the Civil War and World War I, and along the way, they are presented with the challenges of this pastoral family as they attempt to minister to hurting people and a broken society.

**Reasons for teaching:** This novel is highly acclaimed; it has won several prestigious honors and is currently considered one of the best novels from the 21st century. In addition, it is explicitly Christian in content and themes. The author organizes a complex story through the use of precise arrangement and style as she moves readers back and forth through history, over the course of three generations. Our unit will focus on content as well as the development of complex characters and plot.

**Disclaimer:** The story grapples with a father’s guilt, a son’s refusal to follow Christ, and the bloodshed of two wars.

## *Grammar for Writing* by Douglas Grudzina

**Synopsis:** This grammar book will be utilized throughout both semesters. Students will read about the “notions of correctness and clarity in writing” (5). Exercises are presented in the book and students will be asked to respond directly in their text. Throughout the year, exercises will be submitted online and quizzes will occur regarding the information covered in chapters assigned.

**Reasons for teaching:** This text provides grade-level review about grammatical concepts such as parts of speech, punctuation, and troublesome words. It also introduces students to a deeper style of grammar where they are not asked to simply find the correct option, but rather they are asked to prove their knowledge of why a particular grammar rule exists.

## *Great American Poems*

**Synopsis:** This anthology of American poetry includes 102 poems written by American authors from Colonial America to the 21st century. We will read poetry throughout the year as we explore each century and look at how poetry often best represented the emotions of the times. Some poets we will study include Longfellow, Poe, Frost, Crane, Dickinson, Hughes, and Plath.

**Reasons for teaching:** We will be analyzing both the content and language of poetry throughout the year. Discussions about content will look specifically at themes dealing with nature, faith, patriotism, equality, racism, and love for family, God, and country. Literary focus will include imagery, figurative language, diction, arrangement, and more.

**Disclaimer:** We will *not* be reading all 102 poems in the anthology. Some poetry that was not selected for classroom reading may include questionable elements.

## *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

**Synopsis:** Arguably, this is Fitzgerald's best work and is considered one of the top ten best American novels ever written. It takes place during the Roaring Twenties, when America was struggling with the prohibition of alcohol, social class structure, and fear of rising crime due to underground markets. The wealthy Jay Gatsby is reunited with his young love, Daisy Buchanan, who is stuck in a loveless marriage to an arrogant man. Narrator Nick Carraway recounts the story of Gatsby and Daisy, revealing that the yearning for material possessions and what one cannot have only leads to emptiness. Fitzgerald unravels the complexities of hypocrisy during this time in American history and offers a lesson on moral degradation.

**Reasons for teaching:** This novel utilizes a complex narrator, who also happens to be a complex character in the novel. Concepts reviewed and evaluated through this text include narrator, audience perception, reliability of characters, symbolism, theme, tone, twist of plot, and elevated writing style. Content discussions will include an analysis of expository texts that explain the purpose behind the Prohibition and whether it benefitted or hurt the states. We will also discuss the challenges of social classification, the emptiness of possessions and wealth, the effects of moral degradation.

**Disclaimer:** This text includes party scenes where illegal alcohol is consumed. One character is involved in an affair (no explicit content). Other characters struggle with their consciences and question whether consequences are worth the temporary fun that sin provides. There are scenes of violence, including a scene where a man slaps a woman.

## *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

**Synopsis:** This is arguably Hawthorne's most known and celebrated novel. It is set in Massachusetts in the late 1840s, and looks at a Puritan colony grappling with the concepts of good and evil, and the human response to sin. Through the independent Hester Prynne, the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, and the vengeance-seeking Roger Chillingworth, Hawthorne reveals three starkly different ways to deal with sin and the consequences of one's actions.

**Reasons for teaching:** This text introduces students to complex characterization and how authors can use characters to develop theme. Concepts reviewed and evaluated through this text include symbolism, ambiguity, characterization, and theme. Students will also connect American history to the occurrences in this text and evaluate Hawthorne's perspective. Content discussions will look at human response to guilt, shame, humiliation, independence, repentance, and revenge.

**Disclaimer:** Since this novel focuses on sin and the consequences of one's actions, characters make choices that do not align with Scripture—most notably, an affair (no explicit content). The book also includes some minor acts of violence and period-related material, including prejudices against Native Americans, irrational fear of witches, and superstitions.

## *Twelve Angry Men* by Reginald Rose

**Synopsis:** This three-act play was originally an Emmy-award winning television movie. After its success, Sherman Sergel re-wrote Reginald Rose's text as a play, and it has appeared in various versions throughout the theater world

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since. The story focuses on the twelve jurors assigned to a case where a 19-year-old boy has been accused of murder. It looks like an easy verdict, until one juror risks disagreeing with the other eleven. The events that follow illustrate the role of democracy and the judicial system, as twelve very different individuals must come to a unanimous decision about one boy's fate.

**Reasons for teaching:** This play will serve as our introduction to drama for this course. Concepts reviewed and evaluated through this text include stage directions, scenes and acts, characterization, persuasion, argument, and development of plot. Students will simultaneously be reading expository text regarding the American judicial system; therefore, they will compare and contrast Rose's fictional representation of a jury room to various non-fiction cases and articles. Content discussions will look at prejudices, truth vs. lying, personality differences, civic responsibility of citizens, the value of human life, and persuasion.

## *Up From Slavery* by Booker T. Washington

**Synopsis:** This autobiography tells the unique story of a slave boy who became an impactful spokesperson for his people. Washington begins his story by telling his boyhood memories of slavery, the Civil War, Emancipation, and the hard years that followed. Eventually, Washington found opportunities to become educated and he worked tirelessly to guarantee proper education for all colored people, no matter their ability to pay. He became a voice that individuals learned to respect because he stood fast against the "social and ideological biases prevalent in his day."

**Reasons for teaching:** We will only cover four chapters of this autobiography; however, these four chapters are rich in imagery, concrete detail, and persuasion. The class will specifically evaluate Washington's infamous speech at the Atlanta Exposition, analyzing the structure of the speech, the persuasive language, his balance between logos and pathos, and his ability to speak the truth while capturing two seemingly opposite audiences.

**Disclaimer:** Washington refers to a few examples of the physical and mental terrors that African Americans endured during slavery and the years that followed.